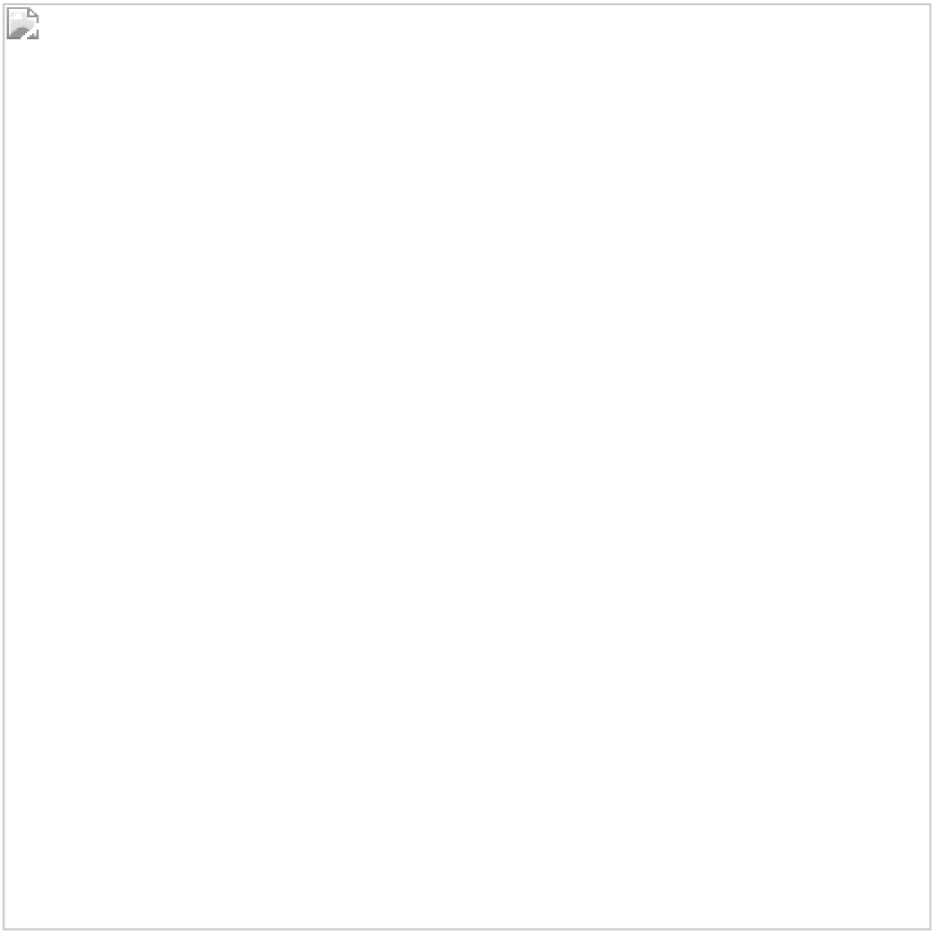
COLORING THE CLASSICS

The Bremen Town Musicians

A Tale from the Brothers Grimm



A certain man had a donkey. For many a long year the donkey had carried the corn-sacks to the mill. But his strength was going, and he was growing more and more unfit for work.

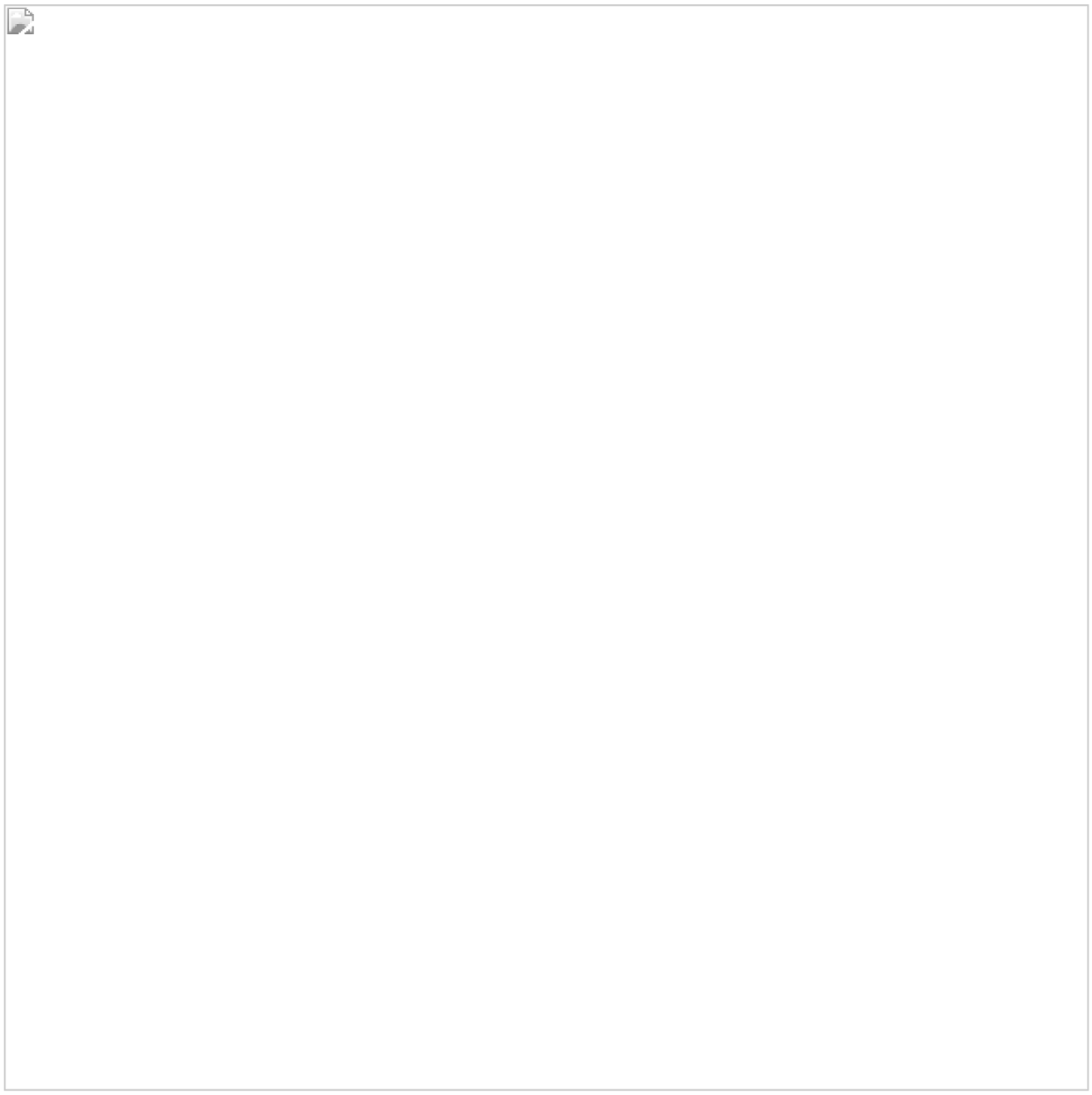
His master began to think how he might save the donkey's keep. The donkey saw that no good wind was blowing, so he ran away and set out on the road to Bremen. “There,” he thought, “I can surely be town-musician.”

TALK ABOUT IT

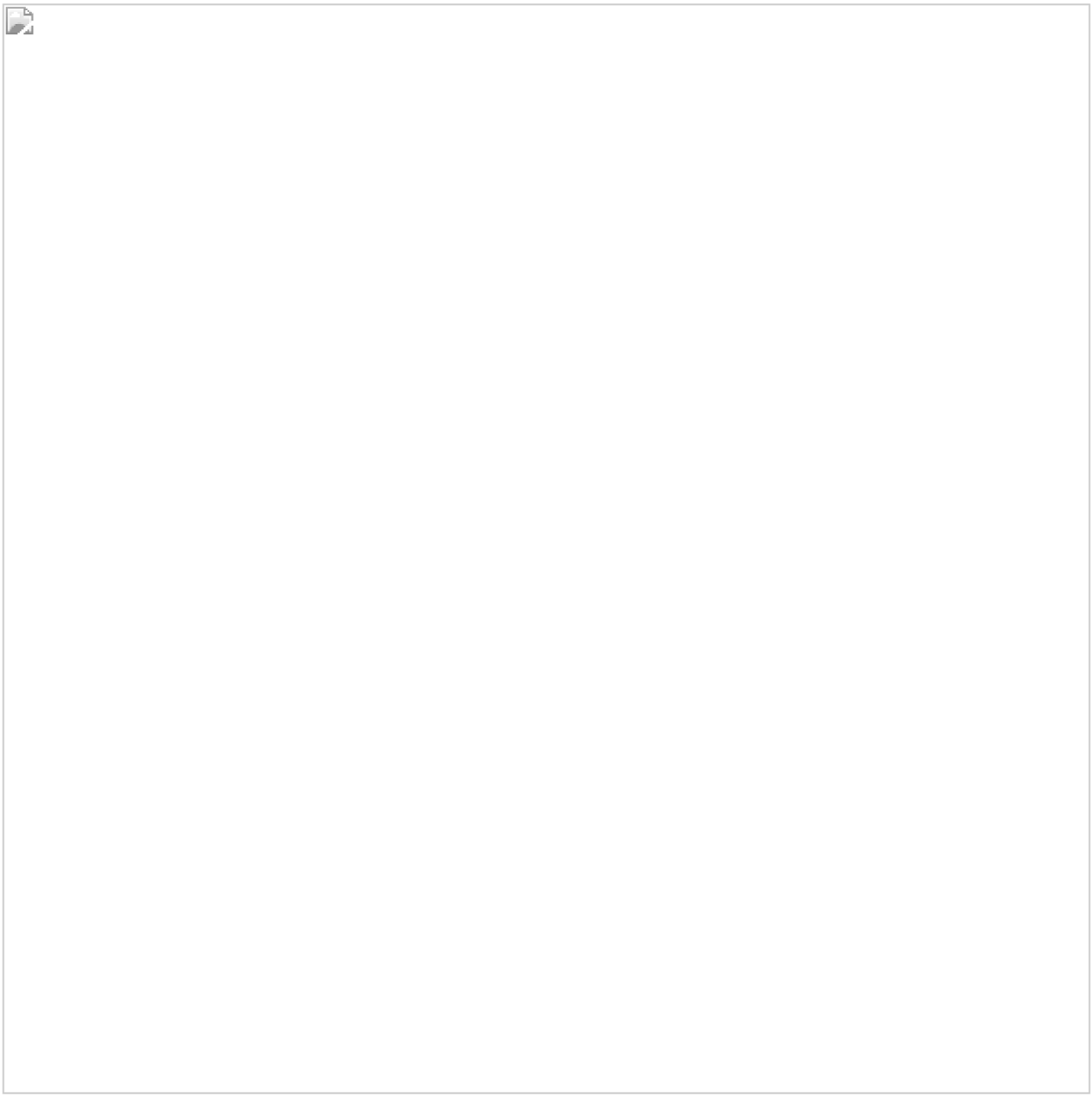
The donkey left and set out for a new place. What do you think he might hope to find there?

This book belongs to _____

The Bremen Town Musicians · another picture



The Hound on the Road



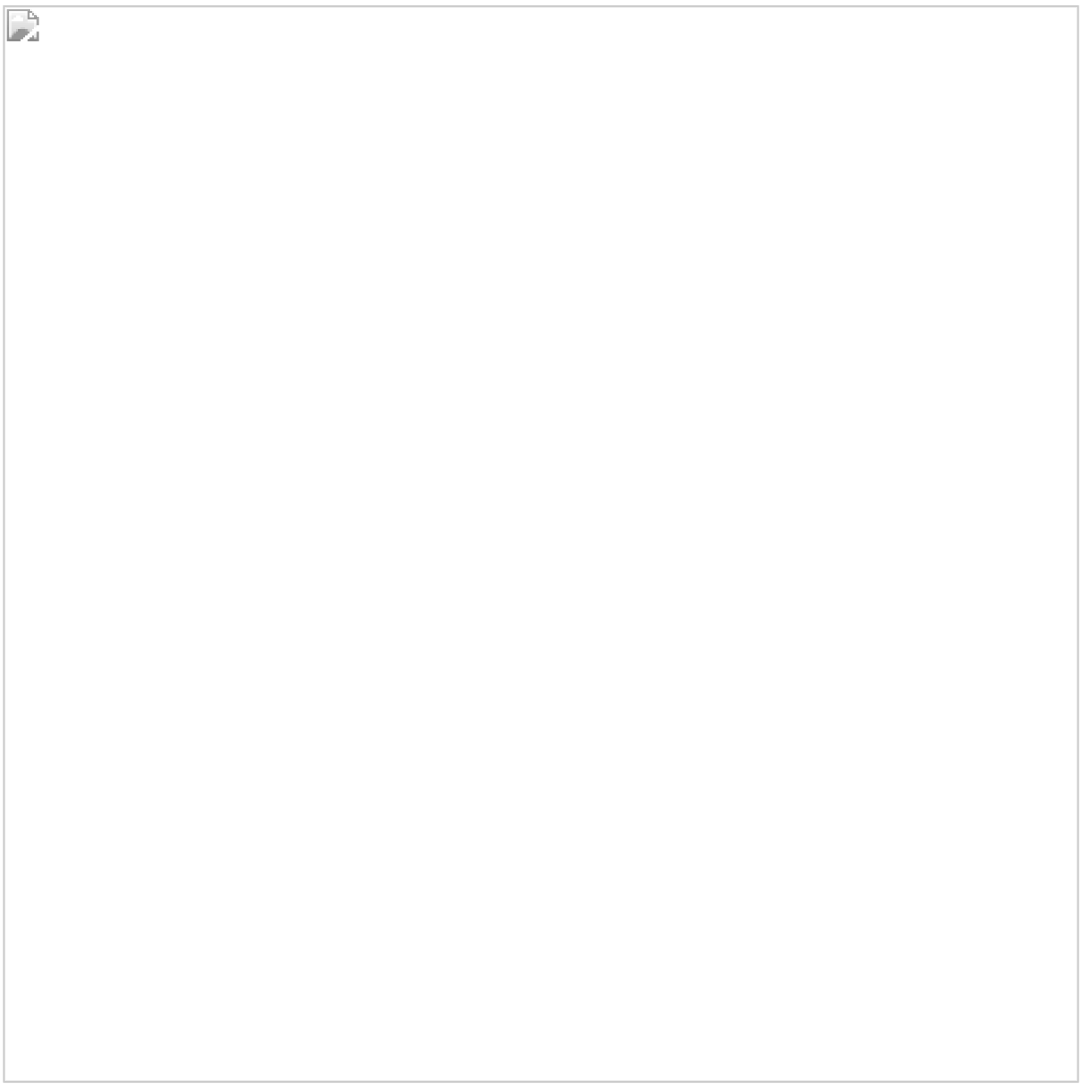
When the donkey had walked some distance, he found a hound lying on the road. The hound was gasping like one who had run till he was tired.

“What are you gasping so for, you big fellow?” asked the donkey.

The hound said that he was old and growing weaker every day, and could no longer hunt. His master wanted to be rid of him, so he had run away. “But now how am I to earn my bread?”

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the hound was gasping so hard?

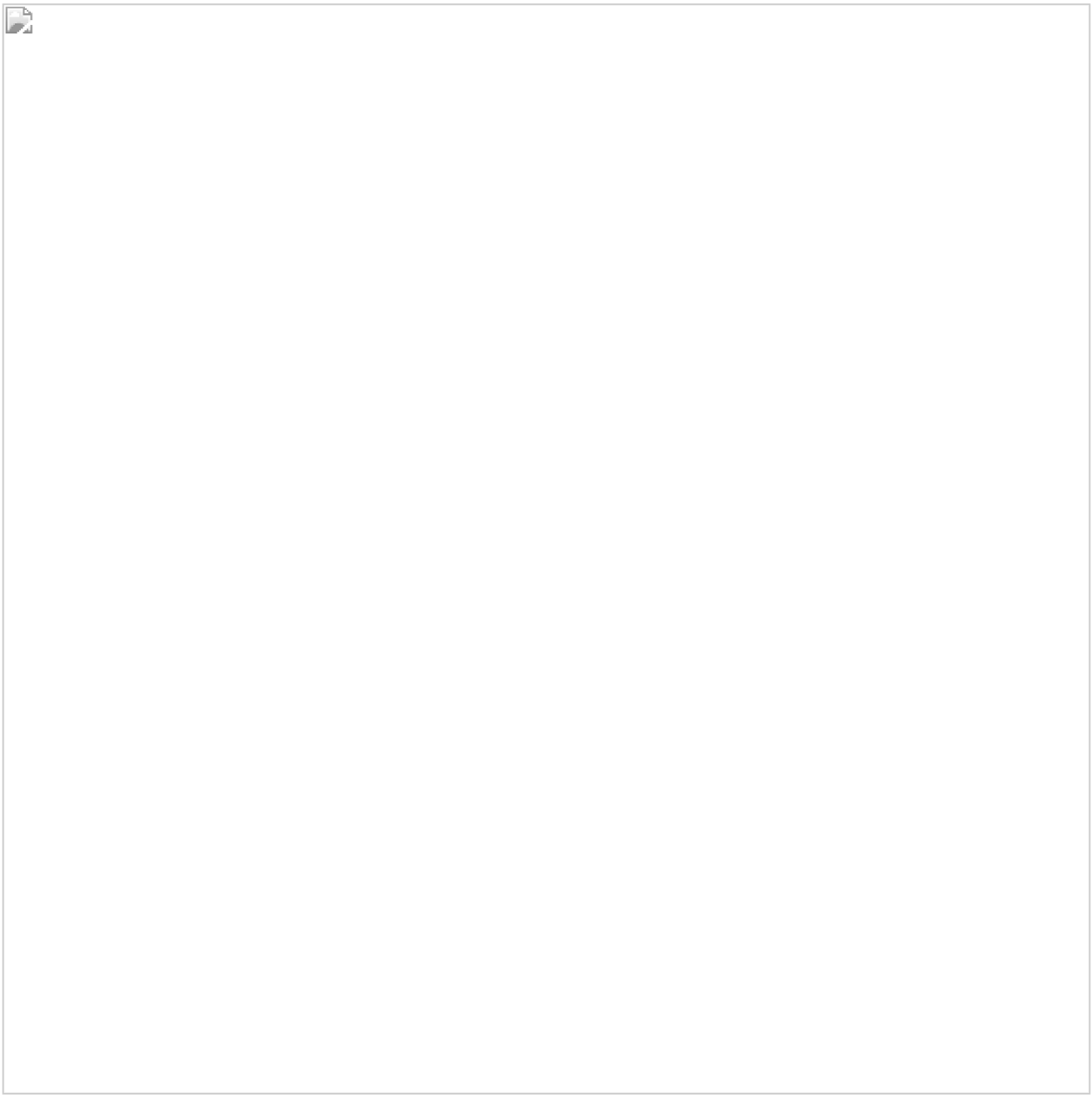


Think about it

1. Where was the donkey going?

- ○ To Bremen
- ○ Back to the mill
- ○ To the sea

A Lute and a Kettledrum



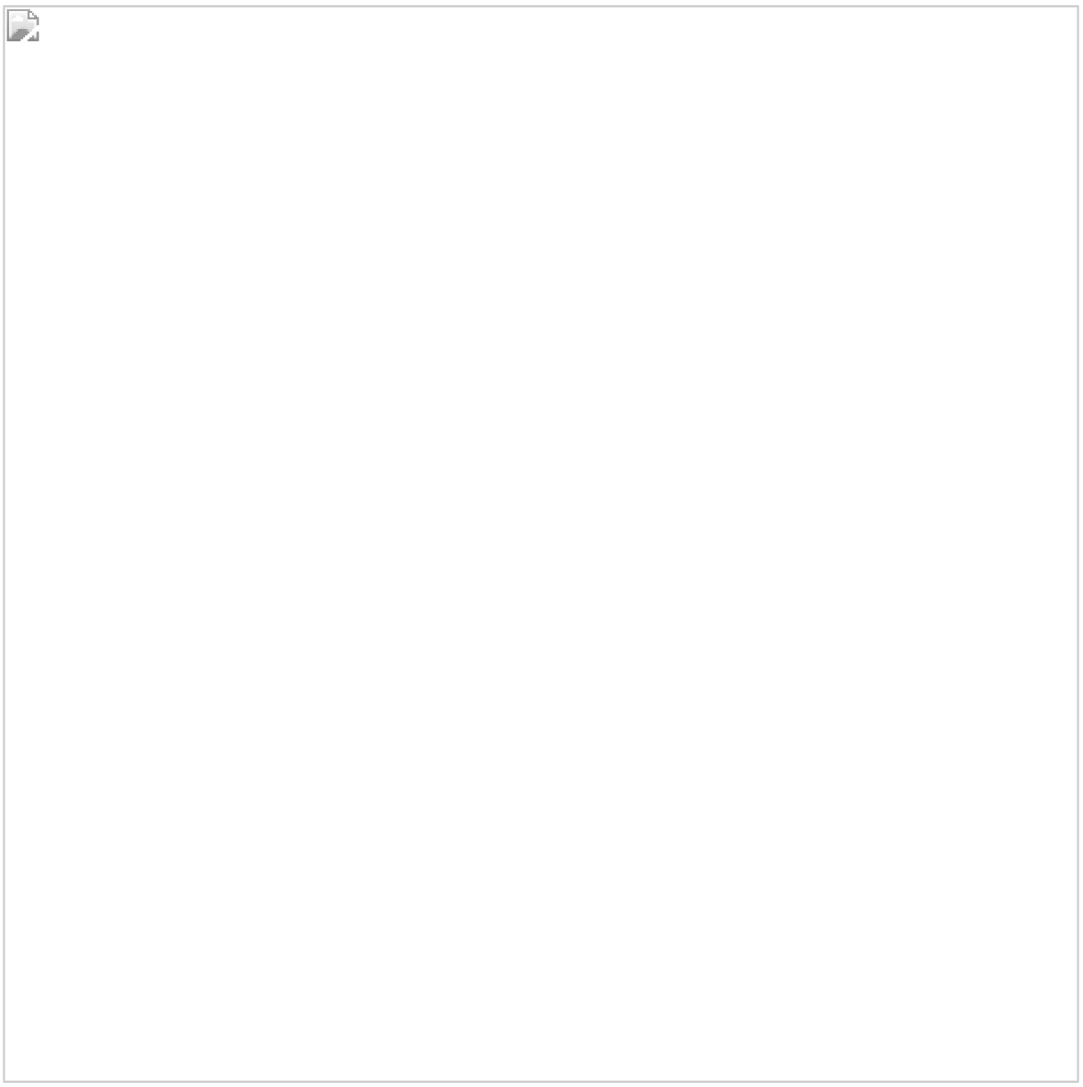
“I tell you what,” said the donkey, “I am going to Bremen, and shall be town-musician there; go with me and engage yourself also as a musician. I will play the lute, and you shall beat the kettledrum.”

The hound agreed, and on they went.

TALK ABOUT IT

The donkey had an idea and asked the hound to join him. When did you last ask a friend to come along?

A Lute and a Kettledrum · another picture

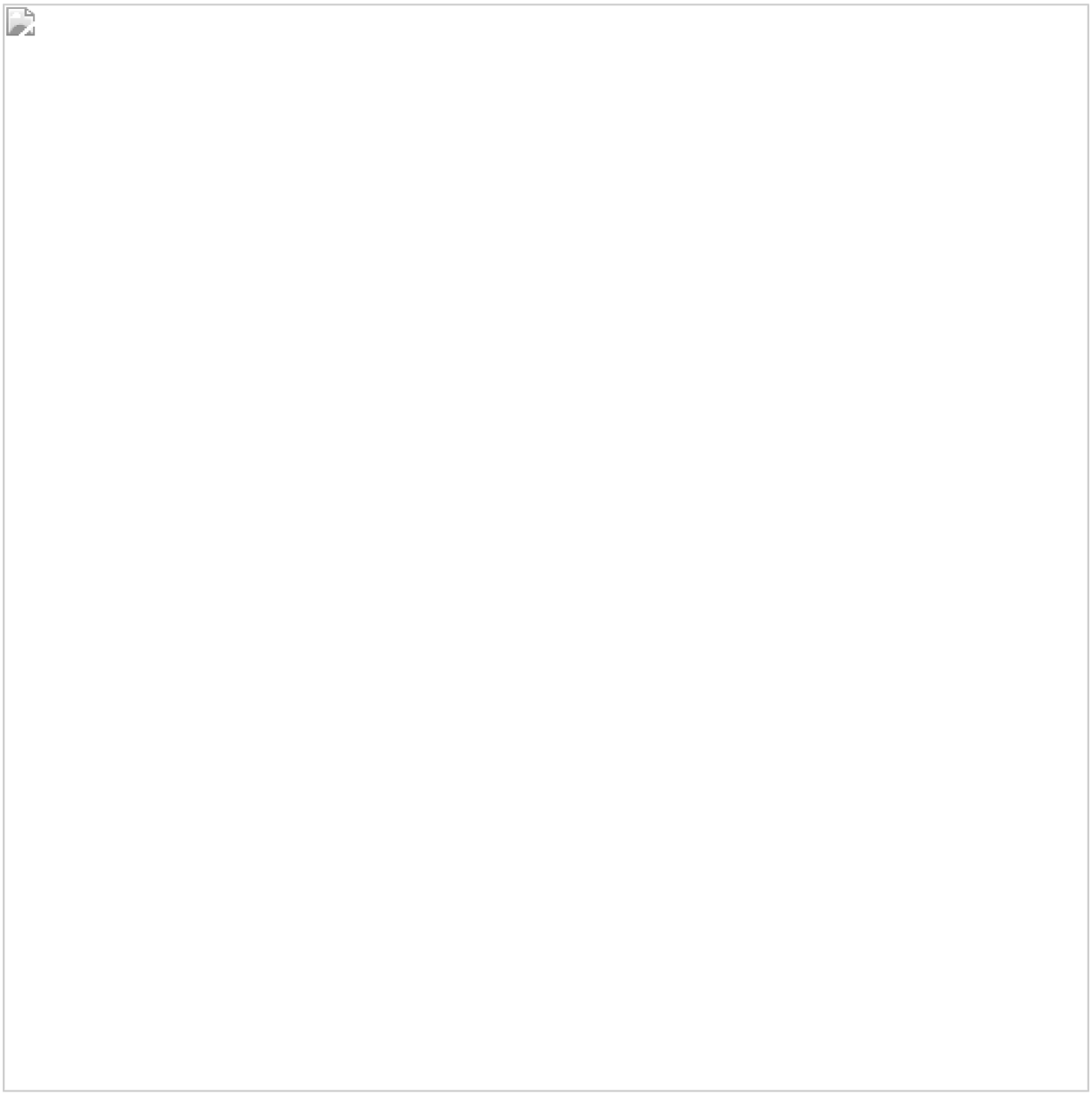


Think about it

1. What would the hound play in the band?

- ○ The flute
- ○ The kettledrum
- ○ The bells

The Cat with a Face Like Three Rainy Days



Soon they came to a cat, sitting on the path, with a face like three rainy days! “Now then, old shaver, what has gone askew with you?” asked the donkey.

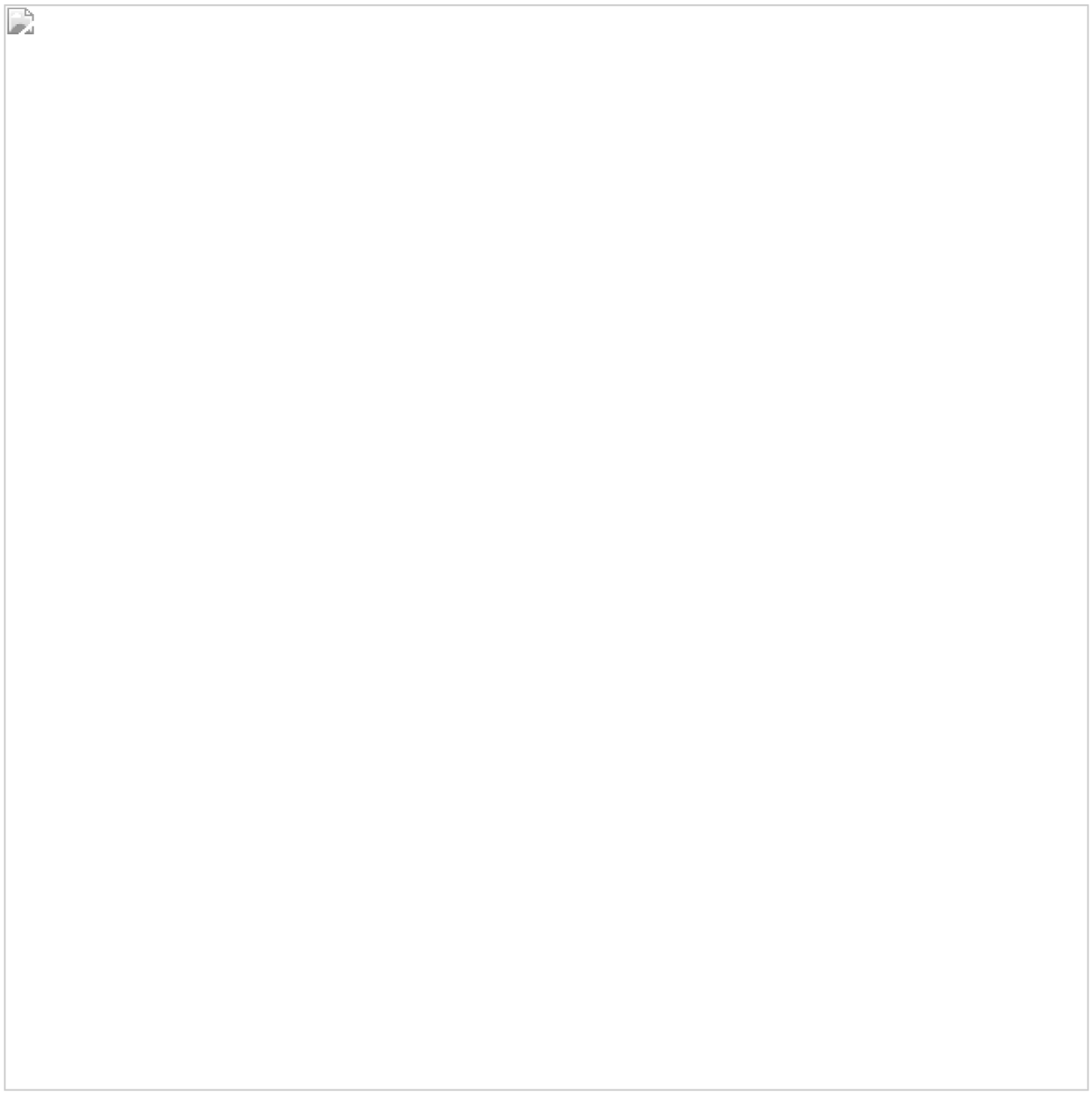
The cat said she was getting old, and her teeth were worn to stumps. She would rather sit by the fire than hunt about after mice, so her mistress wanted to be rid of her. “But now good advice is scarce. Where am I to go?”

“Go with us to Bremen. You understand night-music, you can be a town-musician.” The cat thought well of it, and went with them.

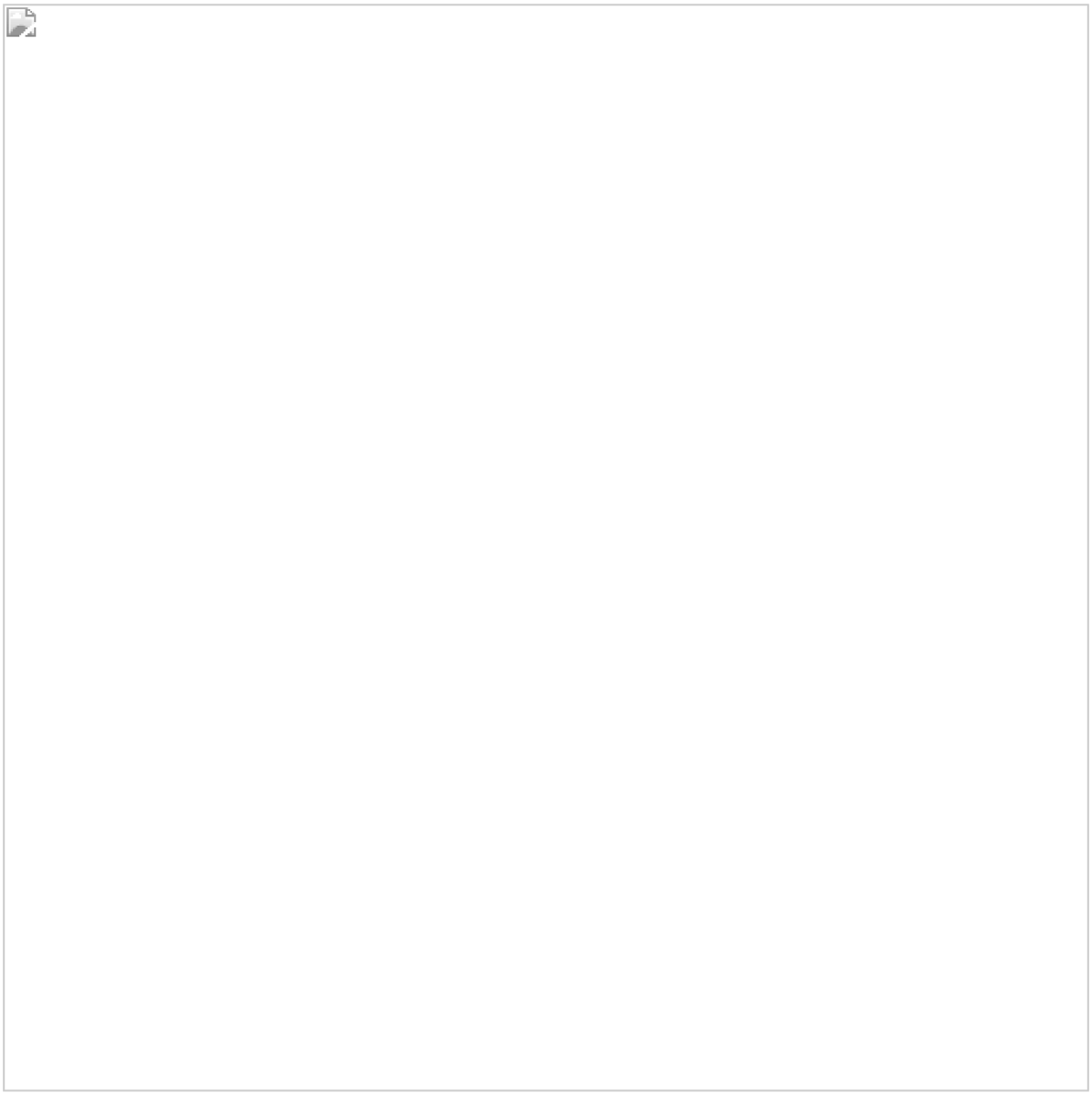
TALK ABOUT IT

The cat's face looked like three rainy days. What does a face like that look like to you?

The Cat with a Face Like Three Rainy Days · another picture



The Cock on the Gate



After this the three came to a farm-yard, where a cock was sitting upon the gate, crowing with all his might.

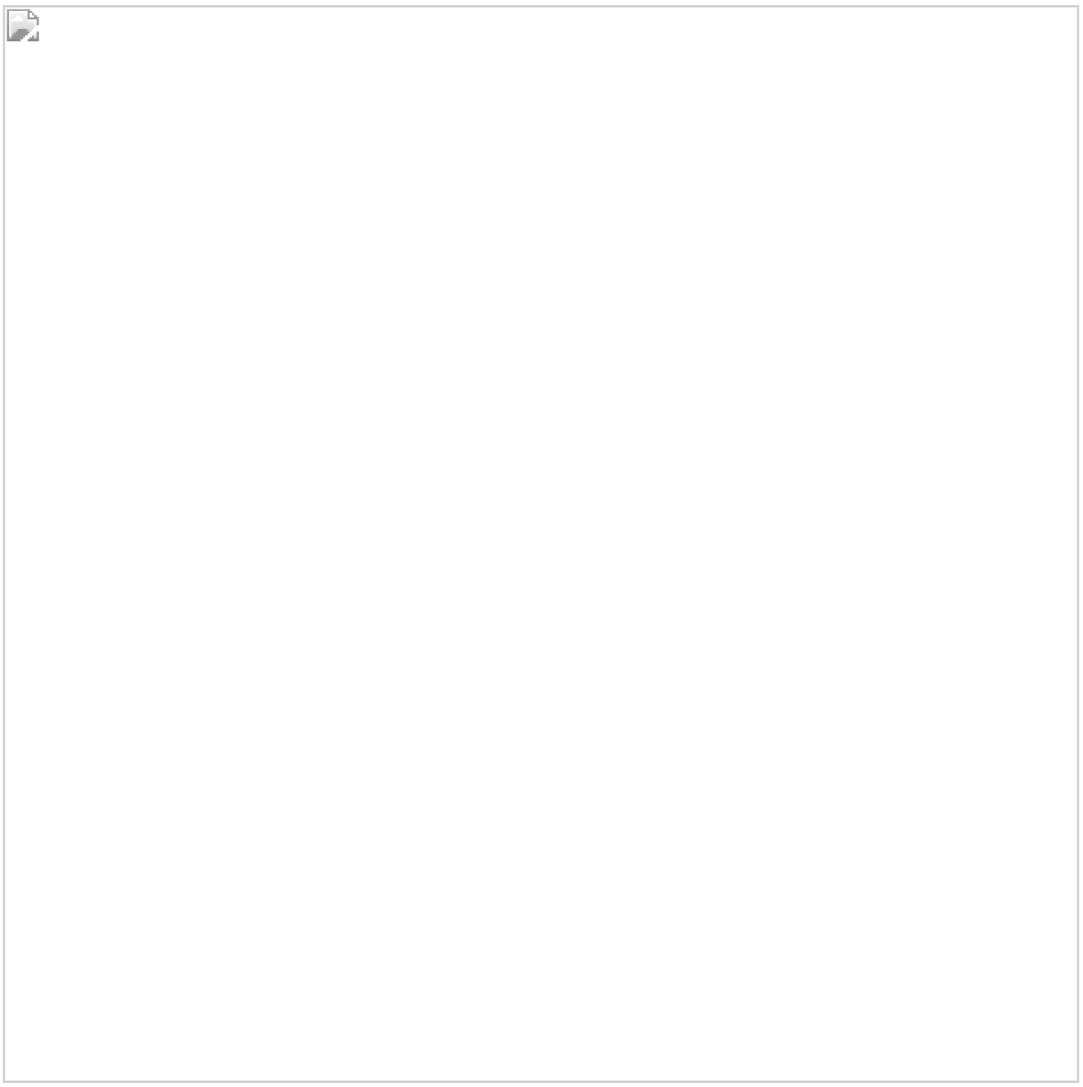
“Your crow goes through and through one,” said the donkey. “What is the matter?”

The cock had been foretelling fine weather. But guests were coming for Sunday, and the housewife had told the cook she meant to put him in the soup to-morrow. So he was crowing at full pitch while he could.

TALK ABOUT IT

The cock crowed as loud as he could. Is there something you like to do at the top of your voice?

The Cock on the Gate · another picture

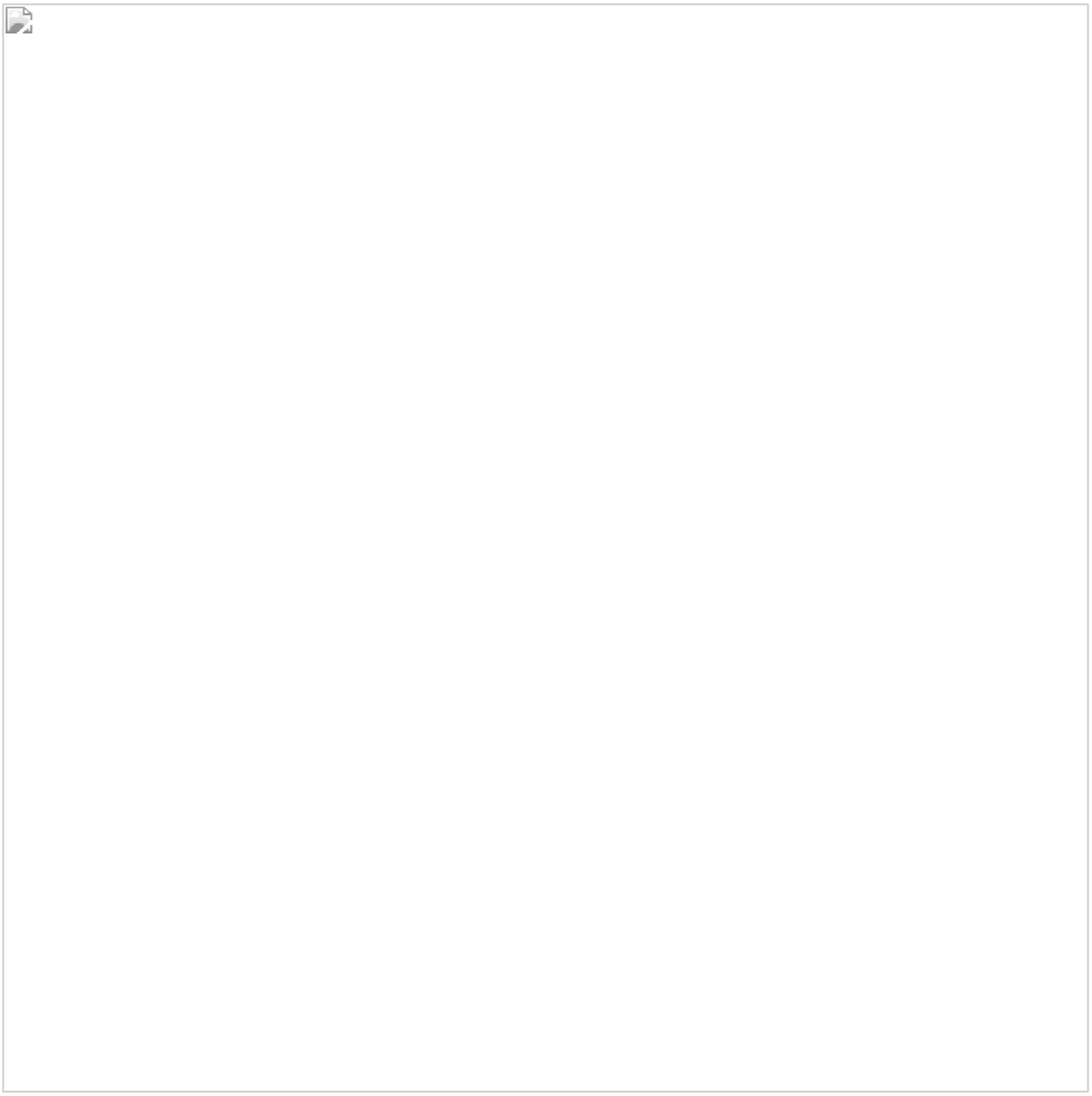


Think about it

1. What was the cock doing on the gate?

- ○ Sleeping
- ○ Crowing with all his might
- ○ Eating corn

Four Together

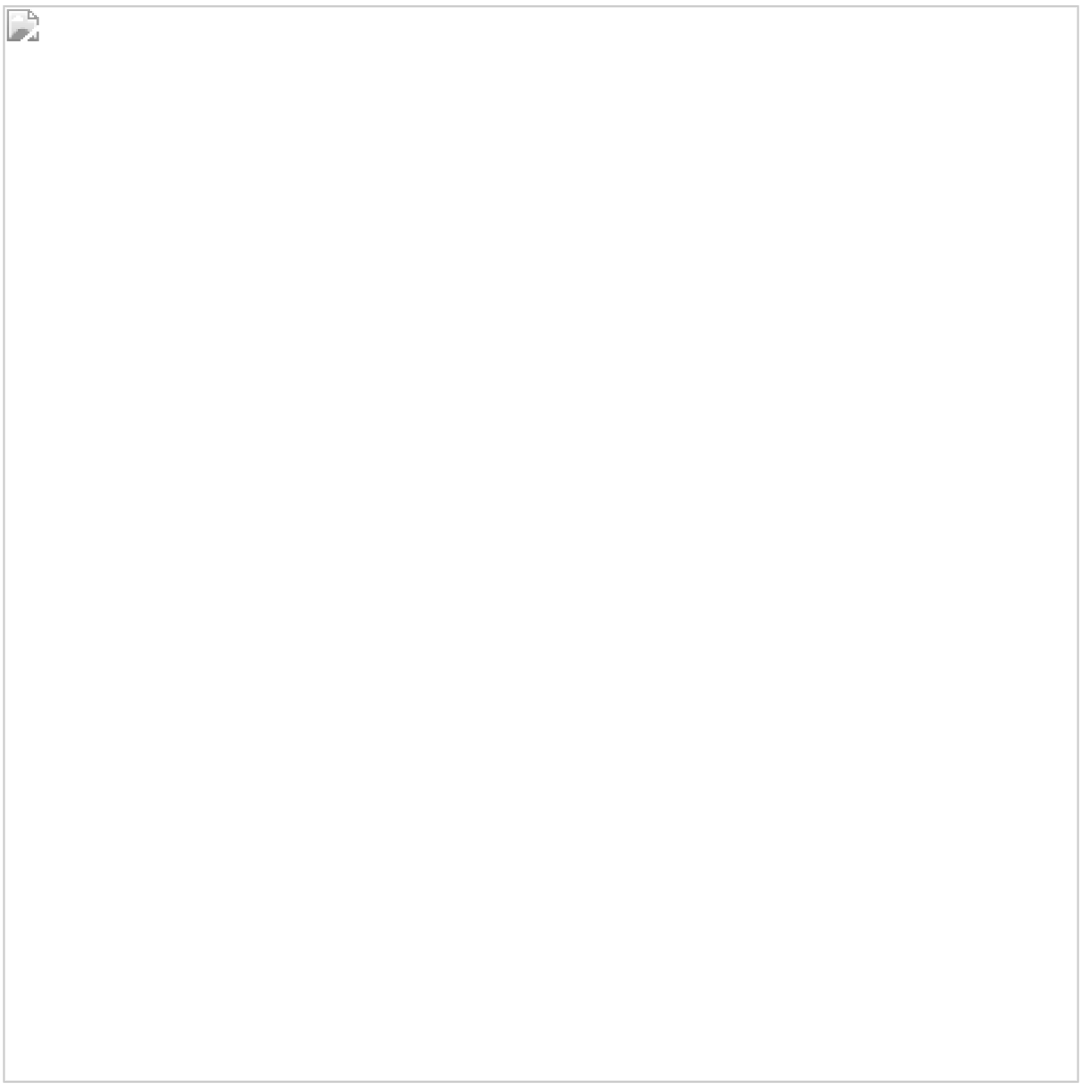


“Ah, but red-comb,” said the donkey, “you had better come away with us. We are going to Bremen; you can find something better than death everywhere: you have a good voice, and if we make music together it must have some quality!”

The cock agreed to this plan, and all four went on together.

TALK ABOUT IT

Now there were four friends: a donkey, a hound, a cat and a cock. What is the same about them?

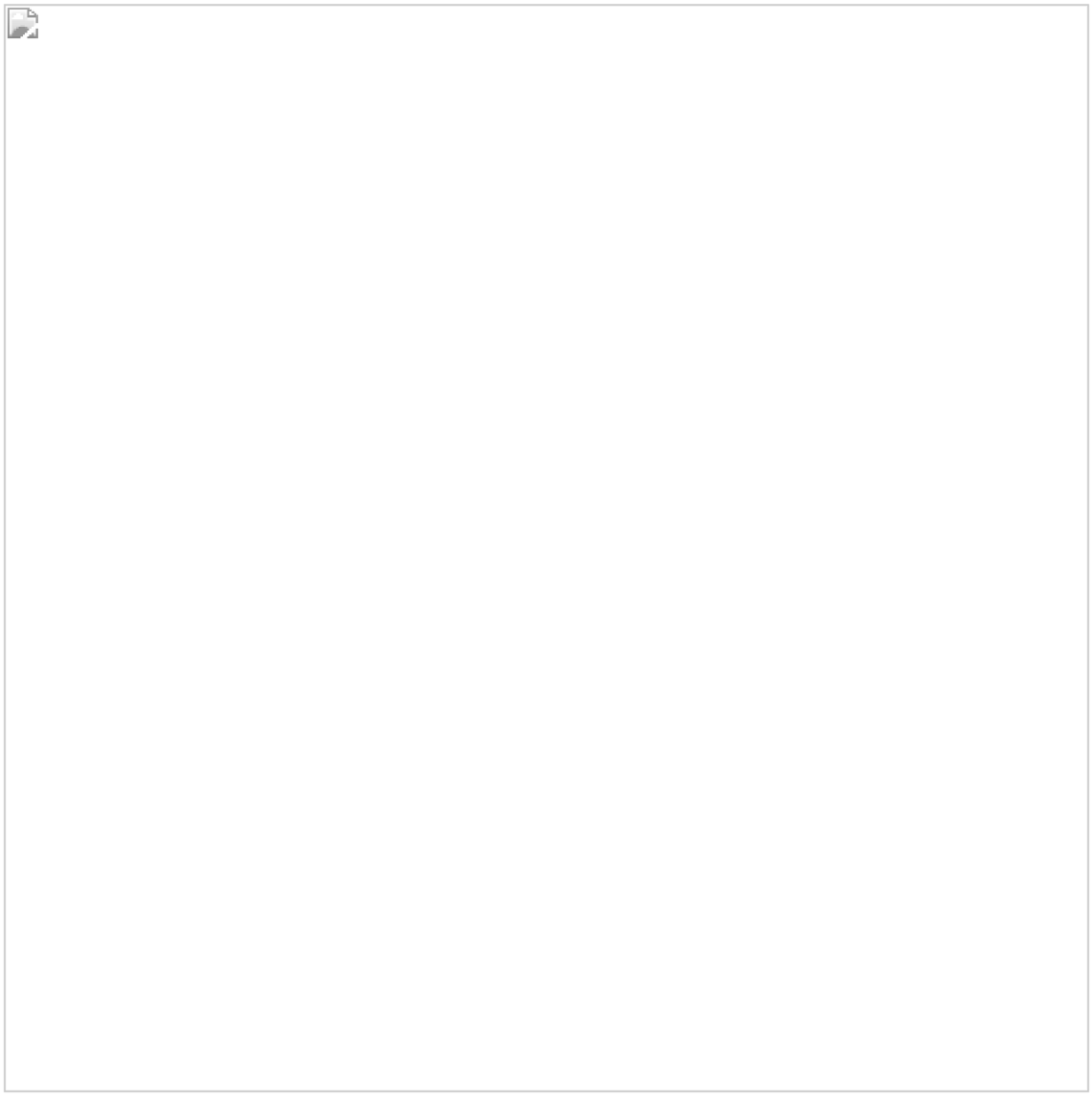


Think about it

1. How many travelers were there now?

- ○ Three
- ○ Four
- ○ Five

A Spark in the Forest



They could not reach the city of Bremen in one day. In the evening they came to a forest where they meant to pass the night.

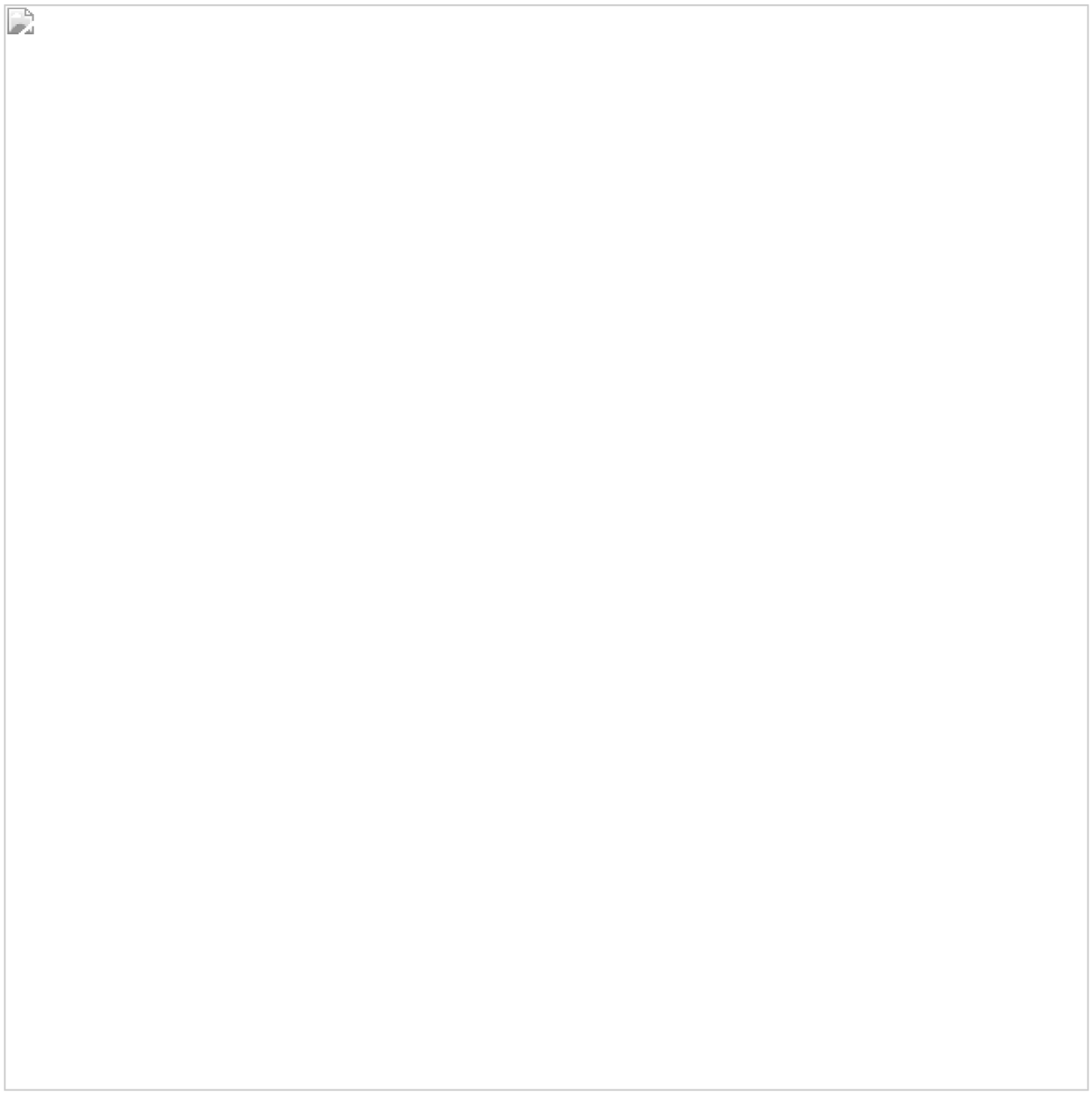
The donkey and the hound laid themselves down under a large tree. The cat and the cock settled themselves in the branches, and the cock flew right to the top, where he was most safe.

Before he went to sleep he looked round on all four sides, and thought he saw in the distance a little spark burning. So he called out that there must be a house not far off, for he saw a light.

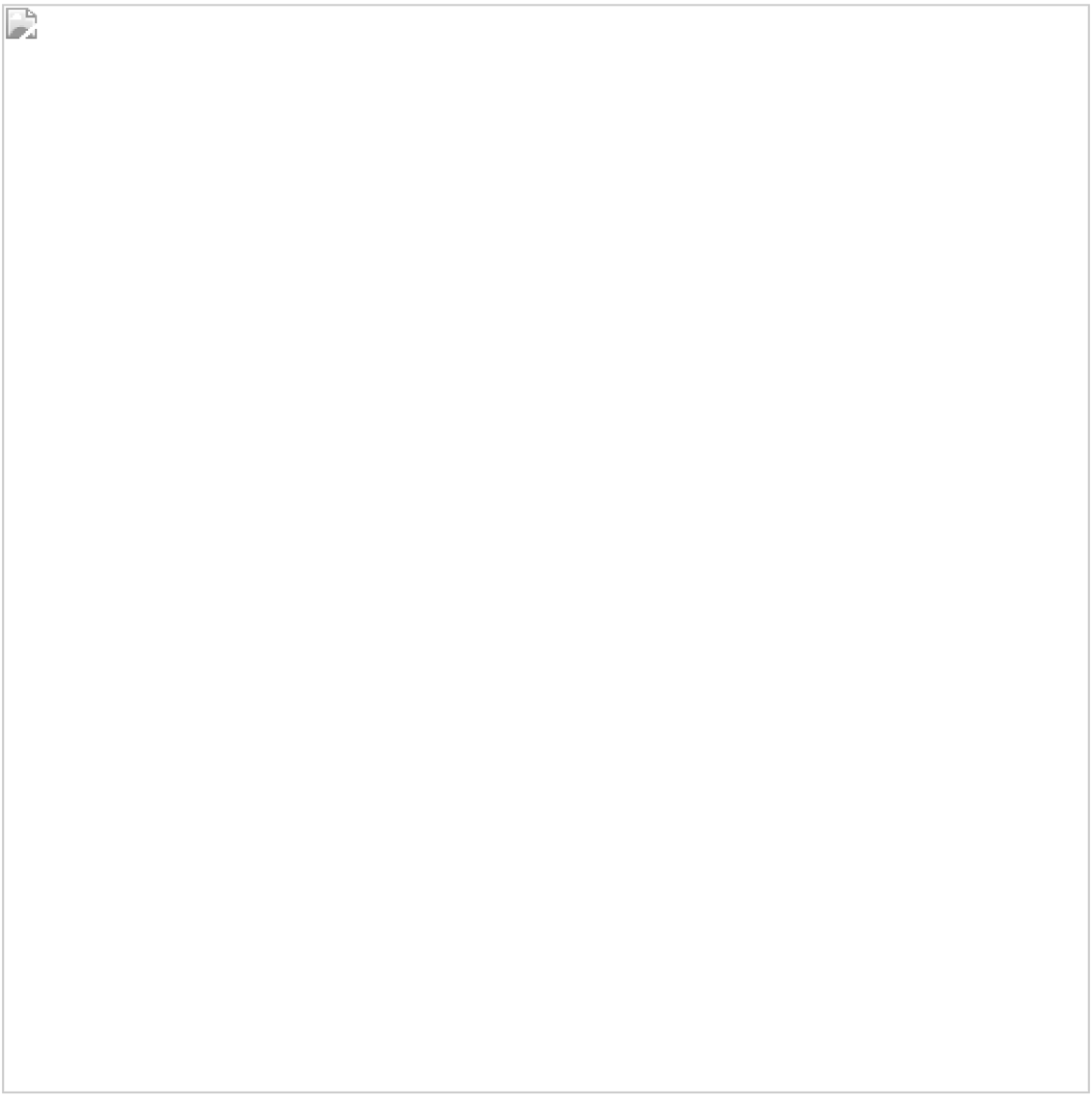
TALK ABOUT IT

The cock flew to the very top of the tree. Where would you pick to sleep, if you were in that forest?

A Spark in the Forest · another picture



The Robbers' House



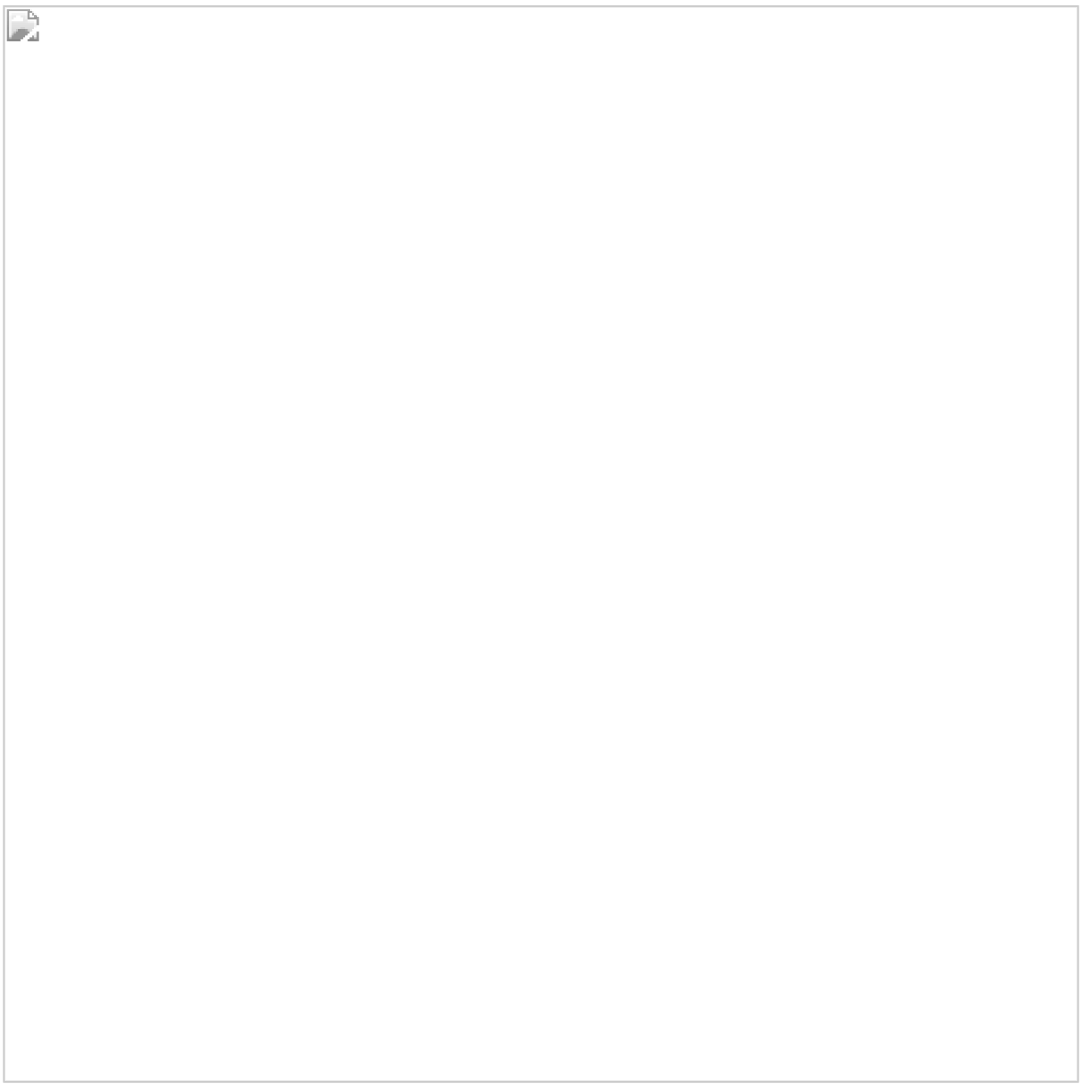
The donkey said, “If so, we had better get up and go on, for the shelter here is bad.” The hound thought that a few bones with some meat on would do him good too!

So they made their way to the light, which shone brighter and grew larger, until they came to a well-lighted robber's house. The donkey, as the biggest, went to the window and looked in.

“What do you see, my grey-horse?” asked the cock. “What do I see?” answered the donkey; “a table covered with good things to eat and drink, and robbers sitting at it enjoying themselves.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the donkey went to the window and not the cat?

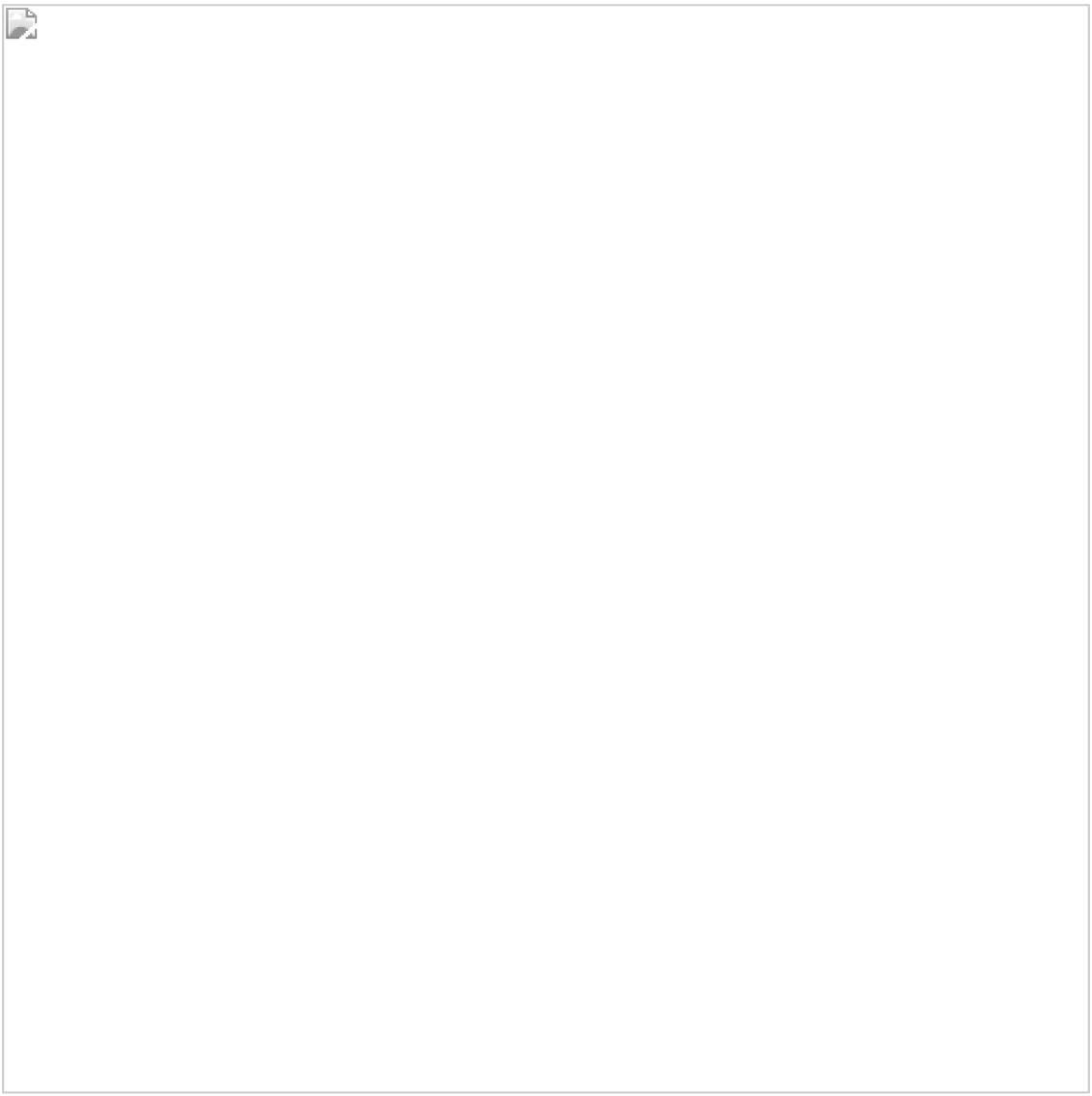


Think about it

1. Who looked in the window?

- ○ The cat
- ○ The donkey
- ○ The hound

The Music



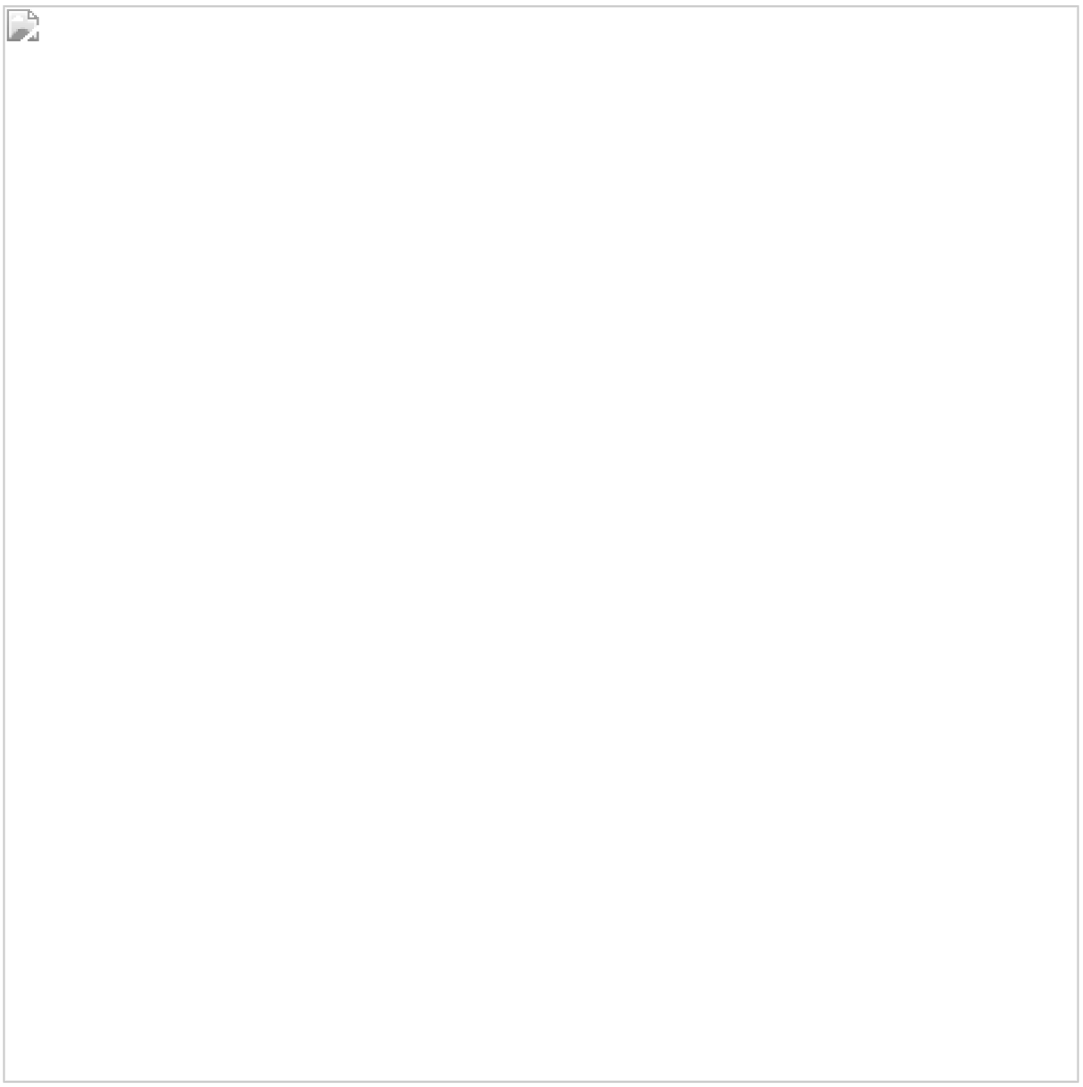
The animals thought of a plan to drive away the robbers. The donkey placed his fore-feet upon the window-ledge. The hound jumped on the donkey's back, the cat climbed upon the dog, and last of all the cock flew up and perched upon the head of the cat.

At a given signal, they began to make music together. The donkey brayed, the hound barked, the cat mewed, and the cock crowed! Then they burst through the window, so that the glass clattered.

The robbers sprang up, thinking a ghost had come in, and fled in a great fright out into the forest.

TALK ABOUT IT

Their music was a great big noise. What noise would you add if you were in the band?

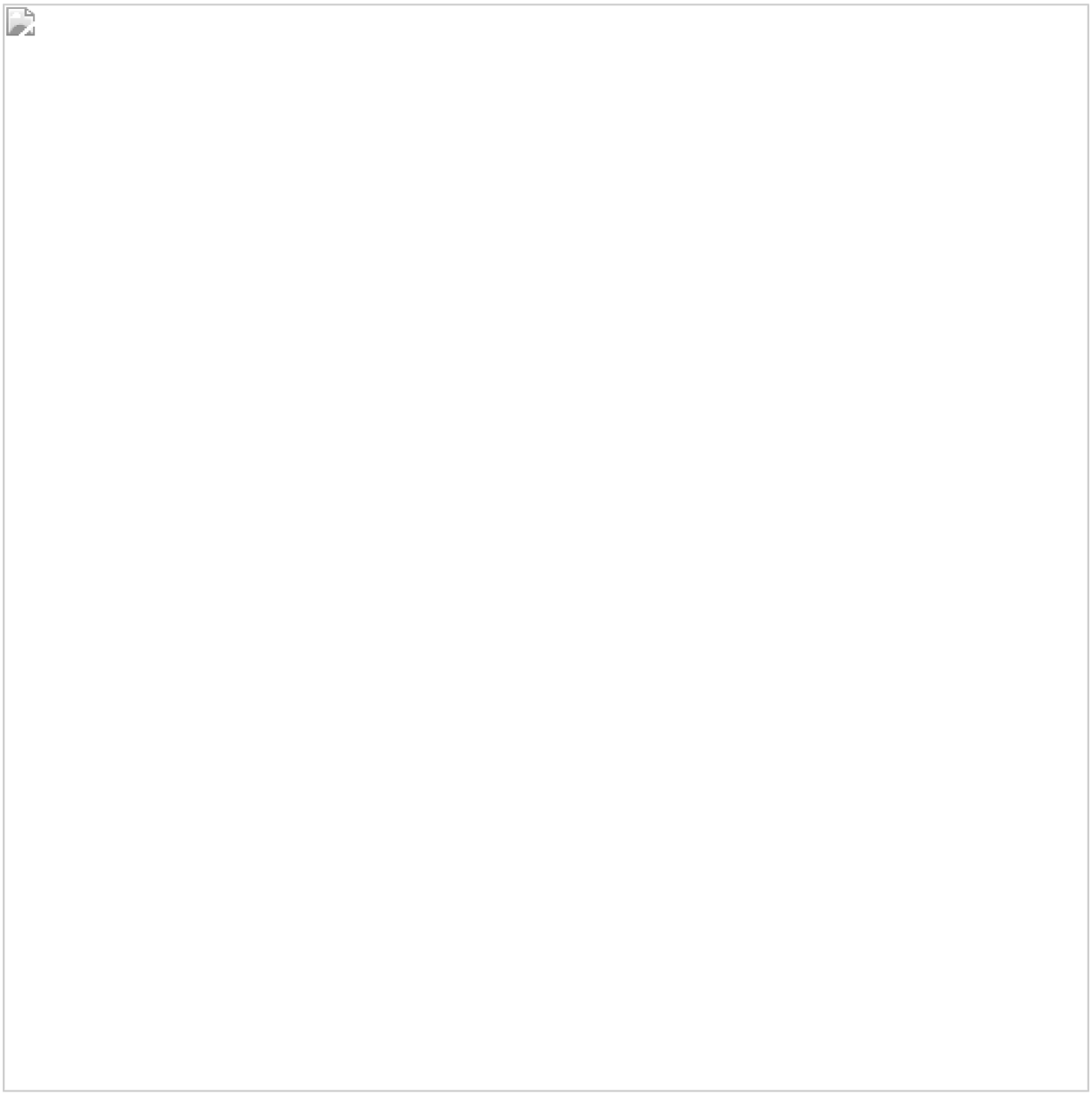


Think about it

1. Who stood on top of the pile?

- ○ The cock
- ○ The hound
- ○ The donkey

Supper and Bed



The four companions sat down at the table, well content with what was left, and ate as if they were going to fast for a month.

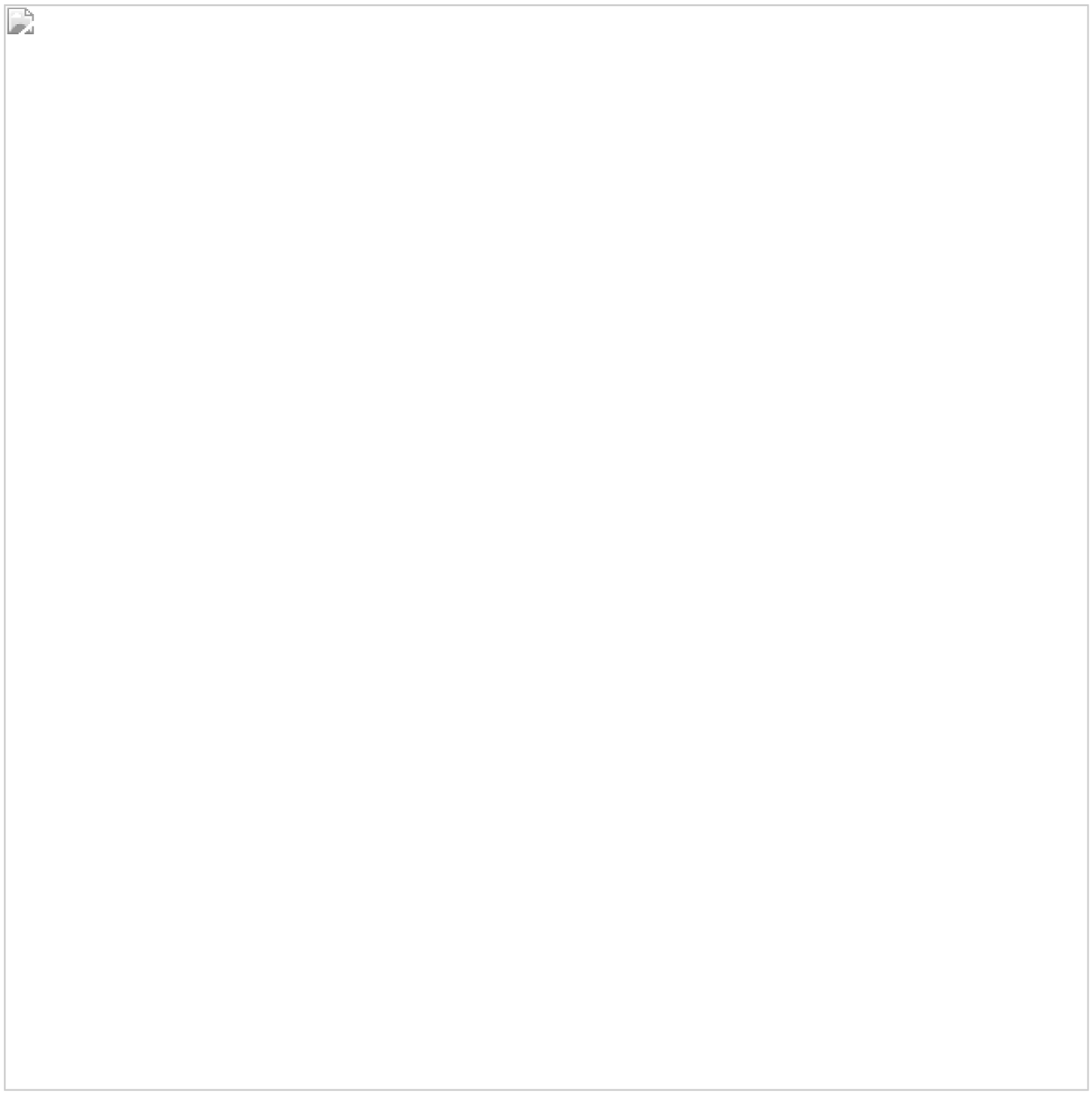
Then they put out the light, and each sought a sleeping-place that suited him. The donkey lay down upon some straw in the yard. The hound lay behind the door. The cat lay upon the hearth near the warm ashes. And the cock perched himself upon a beam of the roof.

Being tired from their long walk, they soon went to sleep.

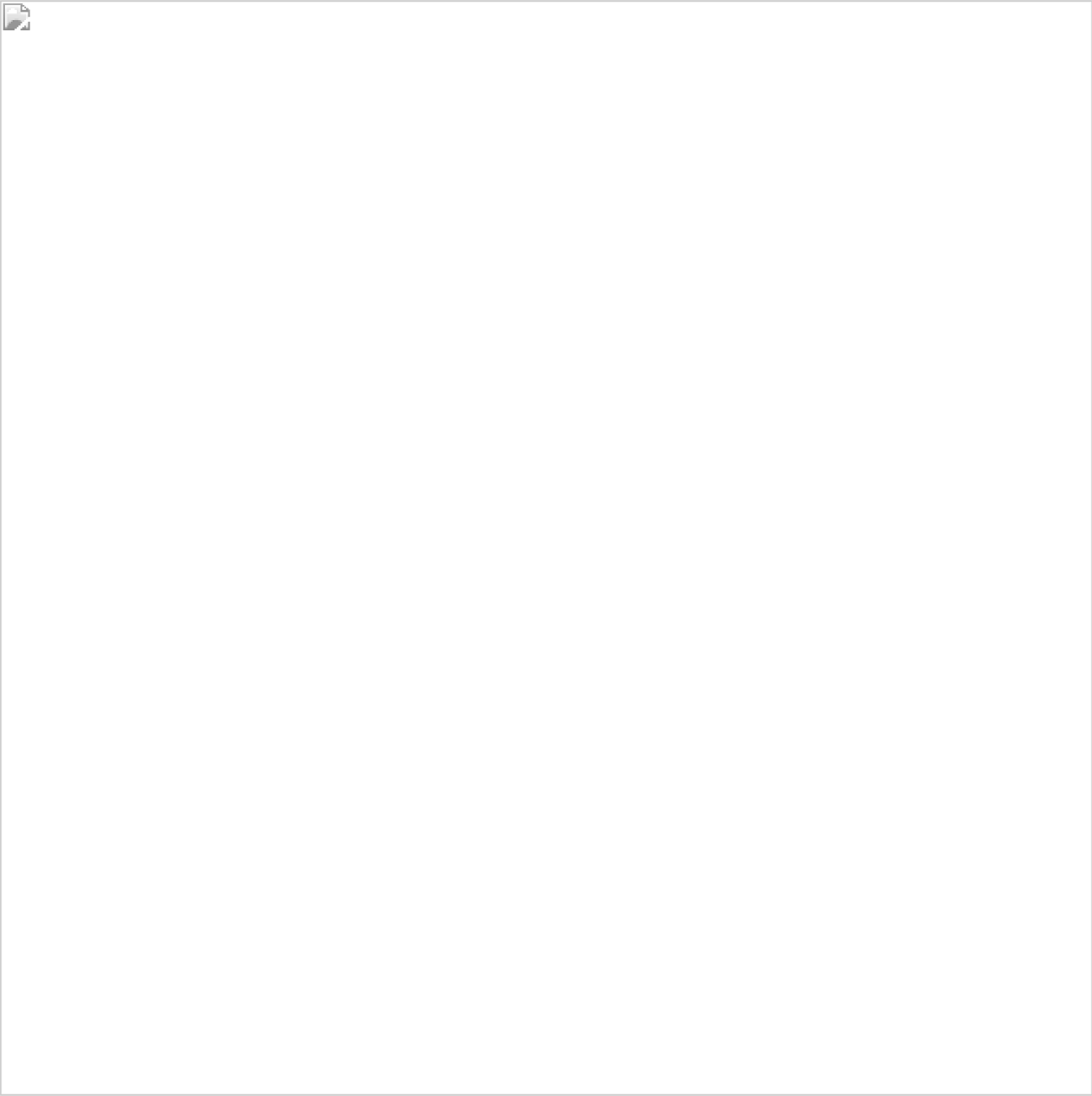
TALK ABOUT IT

Each animal picked a bed that suited him. Where do you like to sleep best?

Supper and Bed · another picture



The Robbers Come Back



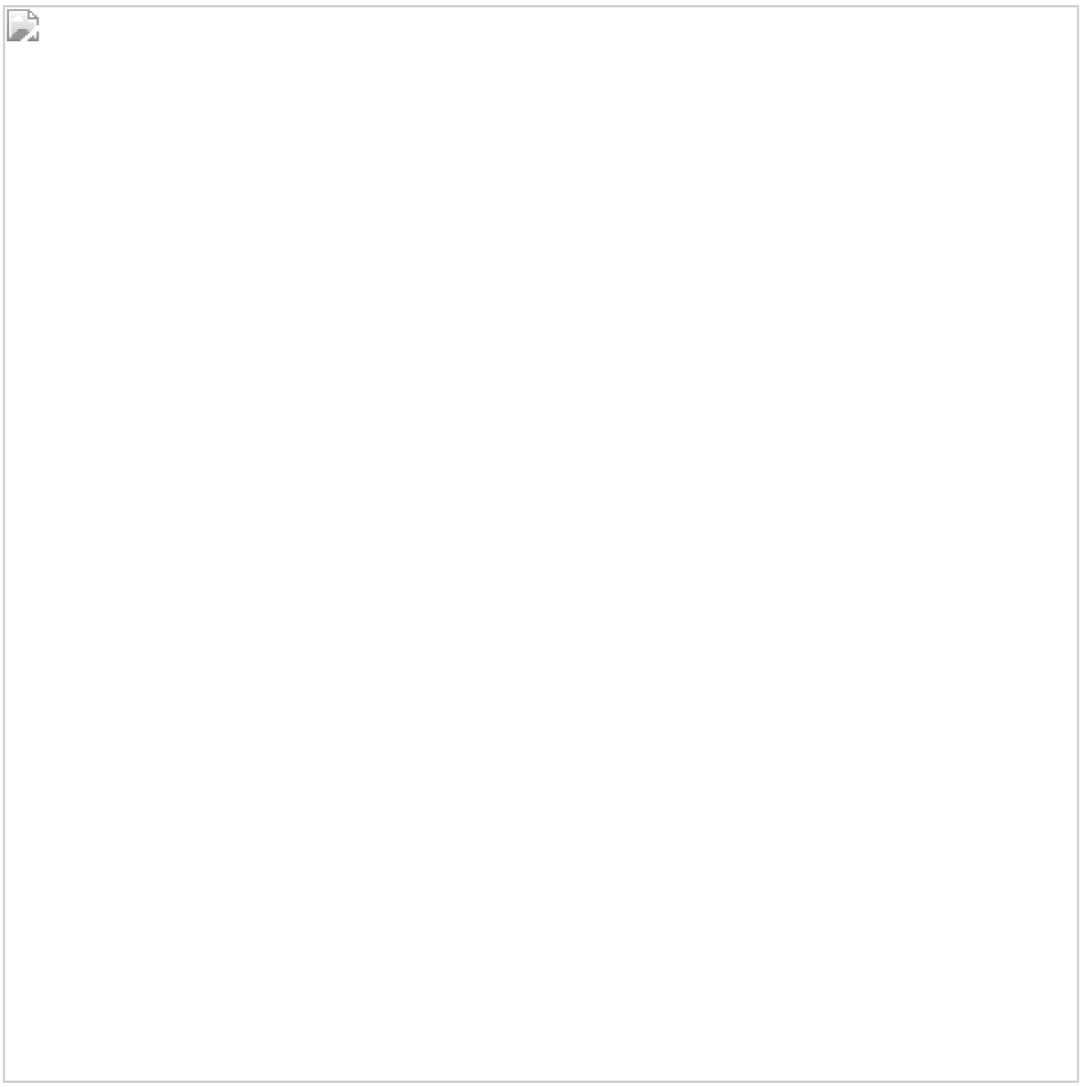
When it was past midnight, the robbers saw from afar that the light was no longer burning in their house, and all appeared quiet.

The captain said, “We ought not to have let ourselves be frightened out of our wits;” and he ordered one of them to go and look into the house.

TALK ABOUT IT

The robbers were curious and a little afraid. What do you think they were hoping to find?

The Robbers Come Back · another picture

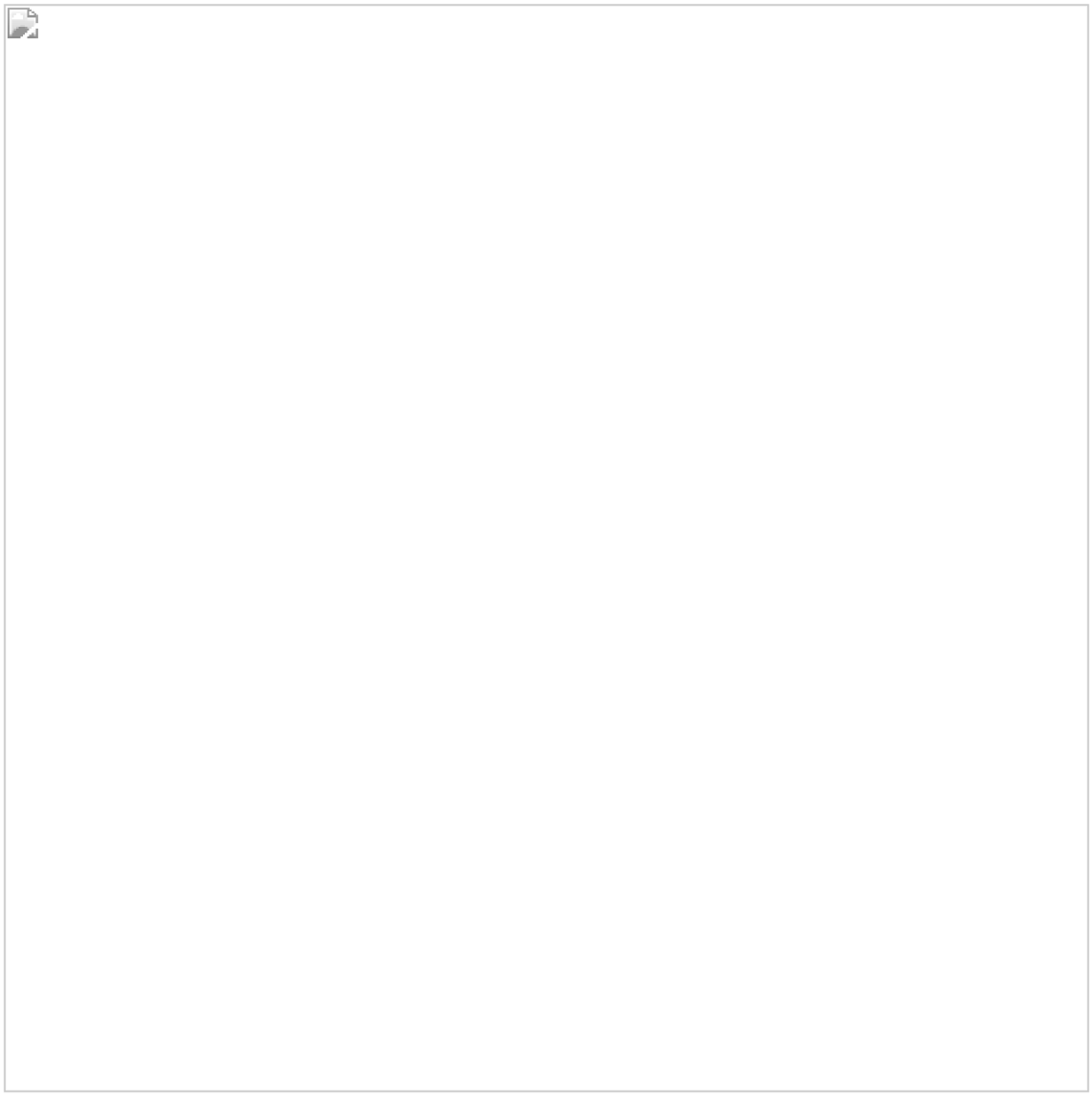


Think about it

1. What did the captain send one robber to do?

- ○ Go and look into the house
- ○ Go to Bremen
- ○ Buy some supper

A Surprise in the Dark



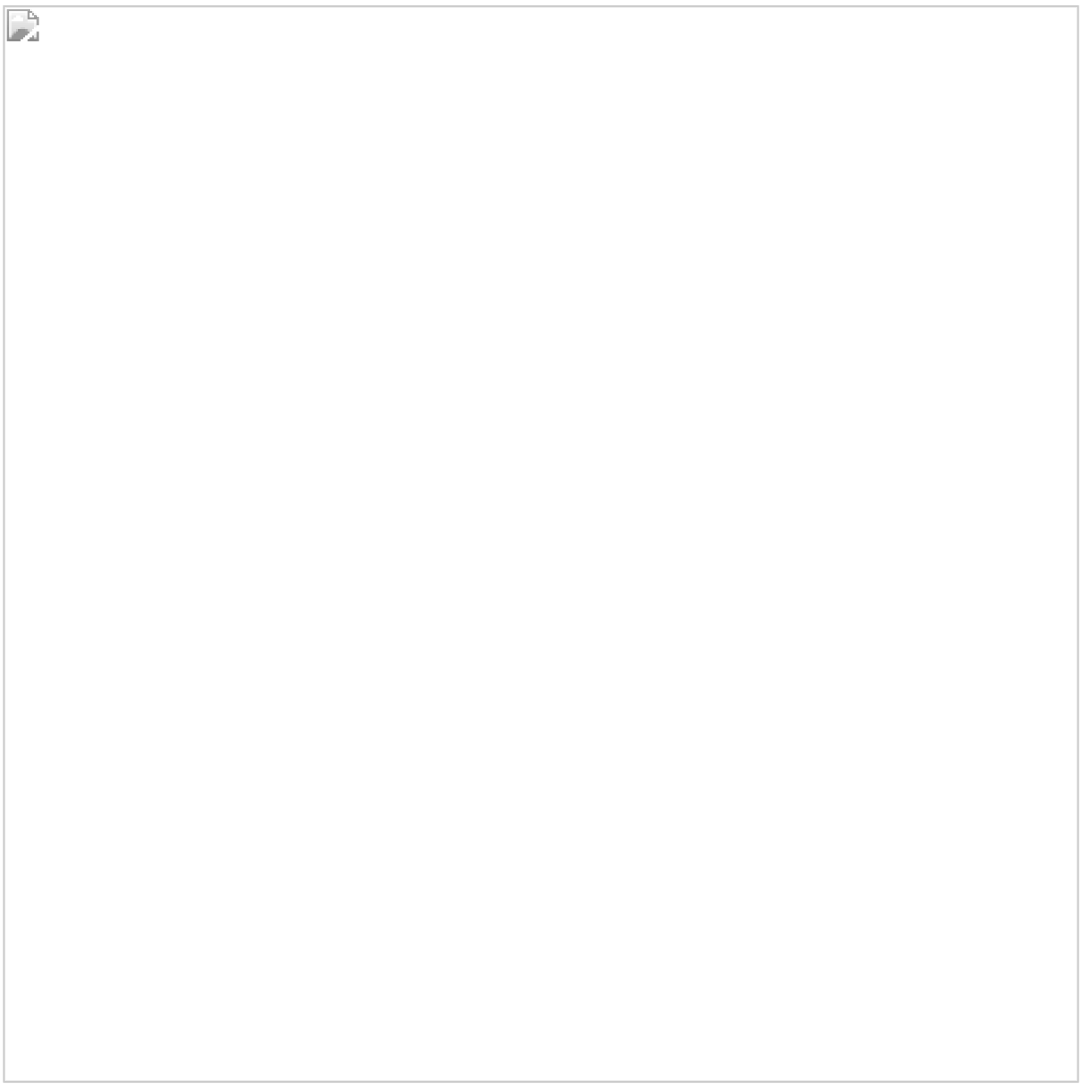
The messenger found all still. He went into the kitchen to light a candle. He took the glistening, fiery eyes of the cat for live coals, and held a match to them.

But the cat did not understand the joke! She flew in his face, spitting and scratching. He was dreadfully frightened and ran to the back-door, but the hound sprang up and bit his leg. As he ran across the yard, the donkey gave him a smart kick with his hind foot.

And the cock, who had been awakened by the noise, cried down from the beam, “Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

TALK ABOUT IT

The robber thought the cat's eyes were coals. Have your eyes ever played a trick on you in the dark?

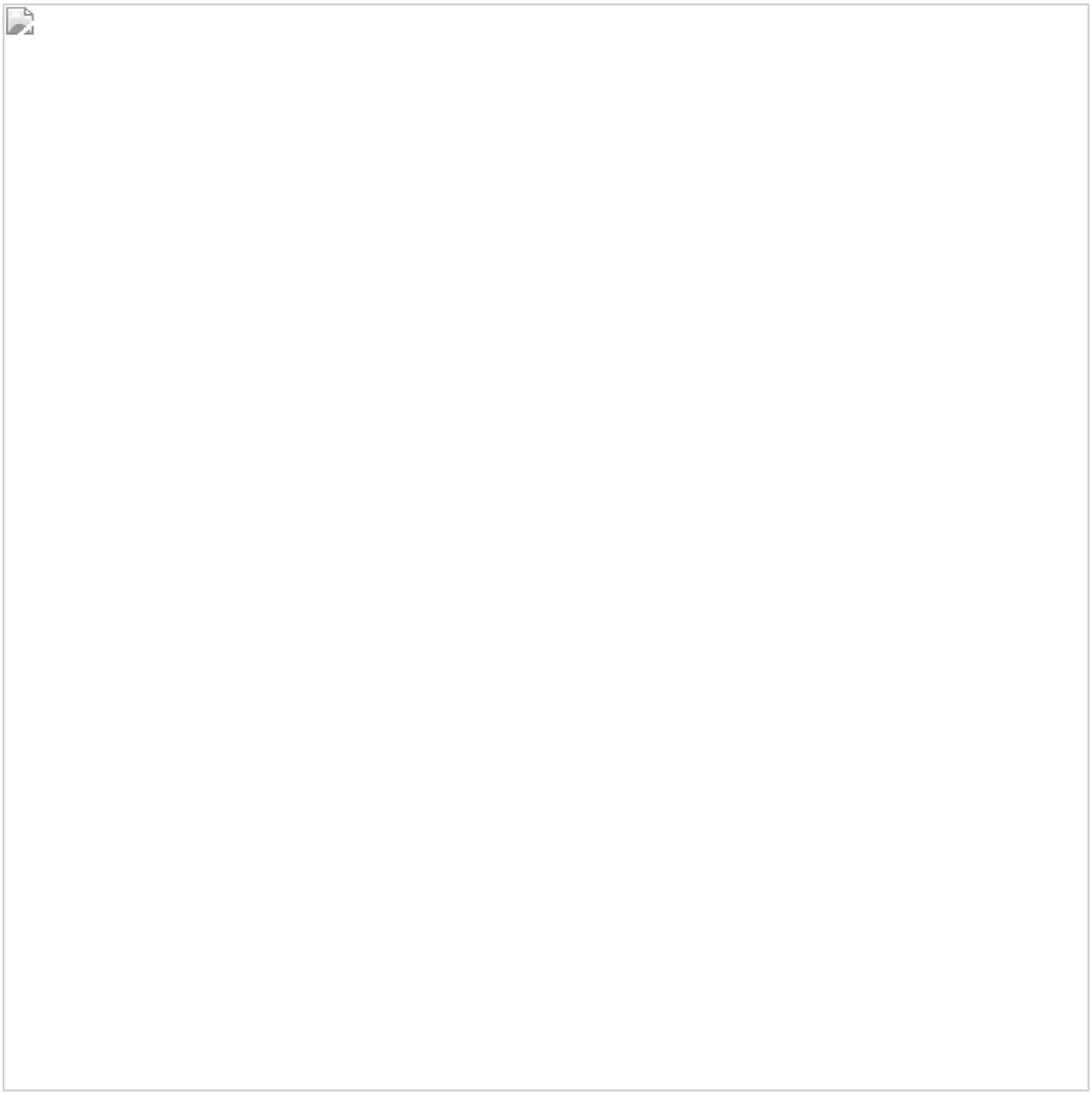


Think about it

1. What did the robber think the cat's eyes were?

- ○ Live coals
- ○ Two moons
- ○ Little lamps in a window

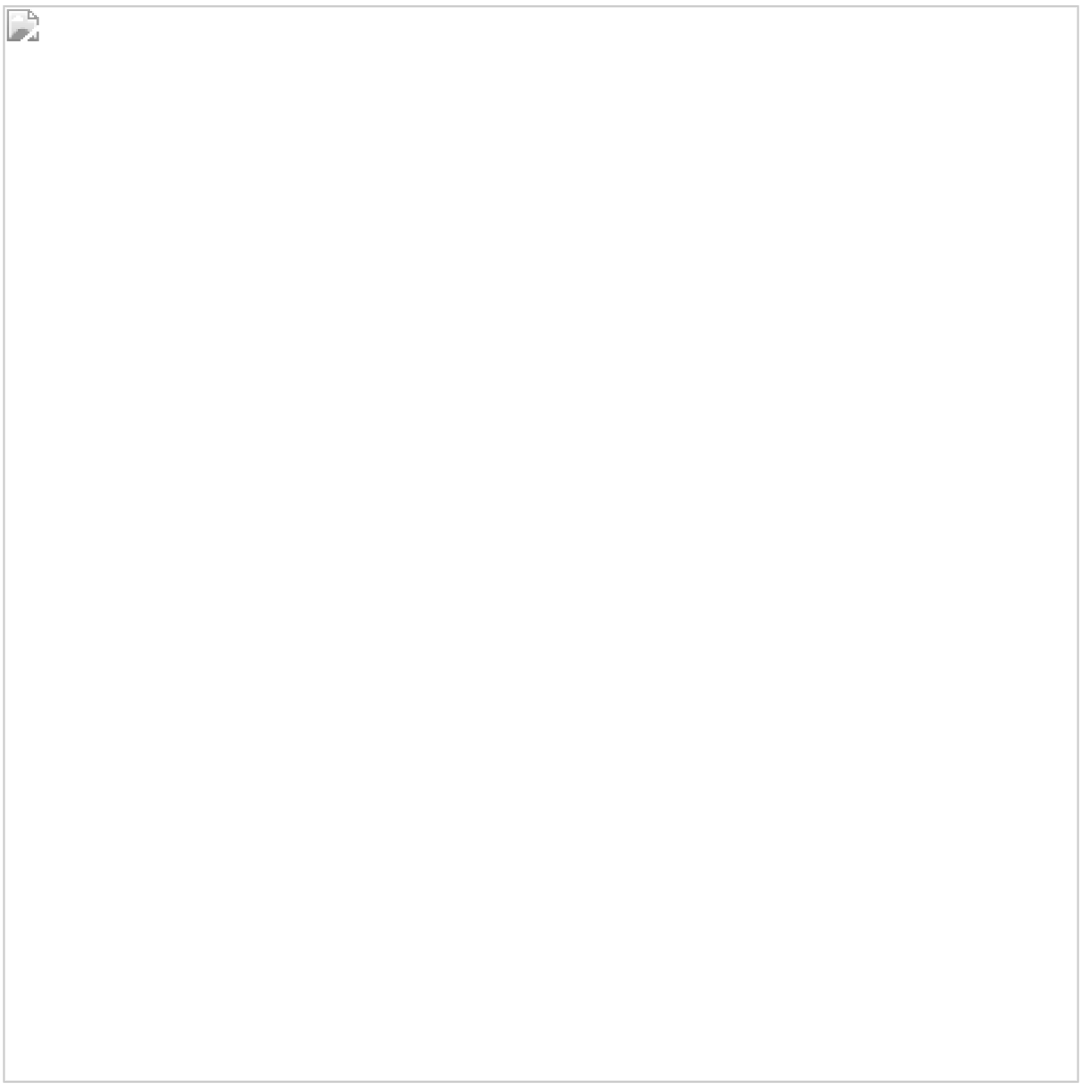
What the Robber Told the Captain



The robber ran back as fast as he could to his captain, and said, “Ah, there is a horrible witch sitting in the house, who spat on me and scratched my face with her long claws; and by the door stands a man with a knife, who stabbed me in the leg; and in the yard there lies a black monster, who beat me with a wooden club; and above, upon the roof, sits the judge, who called out, ‘Bring the rogue here to me!’ so I got away as well as I could.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The robber thought a witch, a man, a monster and a judge had caught him. Who was it really?

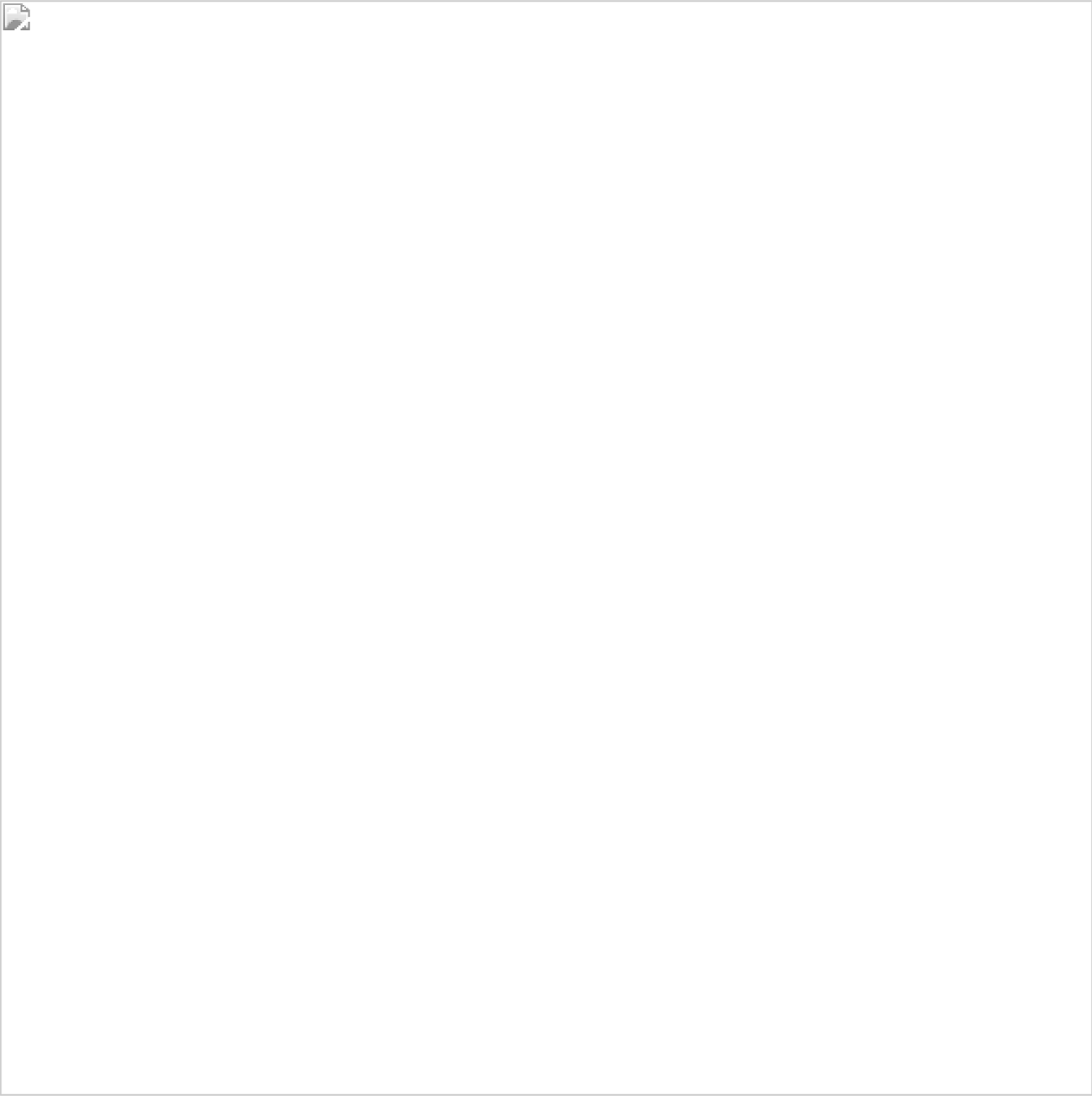


Think about it

1. Who did the robber think was the “witch”?

- ○ The cat
- ○ The donkey
- ○ The cock

A Home at Last



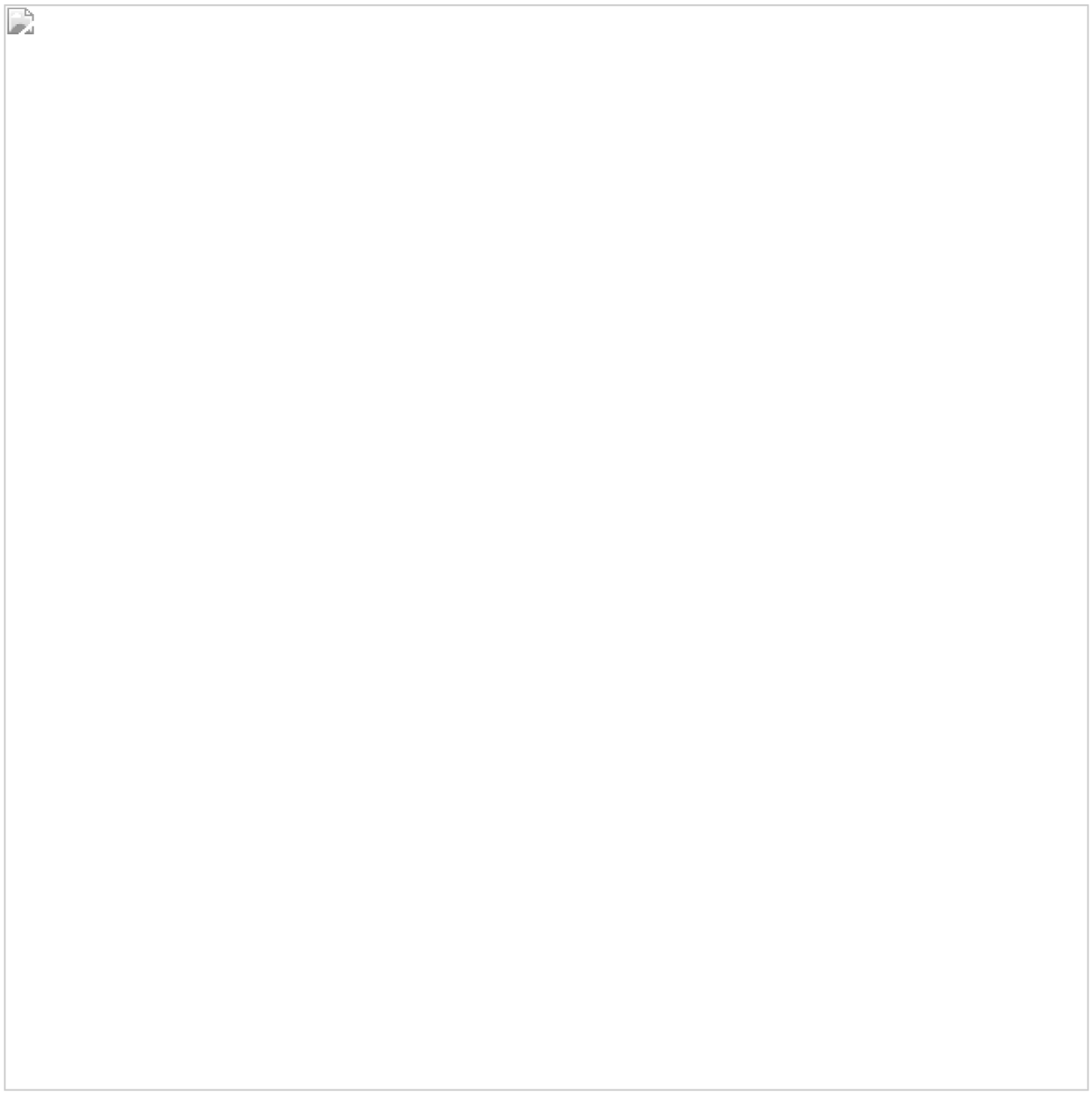
After this the robbers did not trust themselves in the house again.

But it suited the four musicians of Bremen so well that they did not care to leave it any more.

And the mouth of him who last told this story is still warm.

TALK ABOUT IT

The four friends never got to Bremen, and they liked the new place anyway. What makes a place feel like home?



“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

Free to read, color, and print in the Book Library

Made with love by Love is a Habit